

THE FORTUNE HUNTER

Novelized by
LOUIS JOSEPH VANCE
From the Play of the
Same Name by
WINCHELL SMITH

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He found Blinky nosing round the room, quite alone. Betty had disappeared, and the old scoundrel was having quite an enjoyable time poking into matters that did not concern him and disapproving of them on general principles. So far as the improvements concerned old Sam Graham's fortunes, Blinky would concede no health in them. But with regard to Duncan there was another story to tell. Duncan apparently controlled money to some vague extent.

"You're Mr. Duncan, ain't you?" he asked, with his feet, moving down to meet Nat.

"Yes, sir. Mr. Lockwood, I believe?" "That's me," Blinky clutched his hand in a genial claw. "I'm glad to meet you."

"Thank you," said Duncan. "Something I can do for you, sir?" "Waal, Pete Willin' was tellin' me you'd just took up this note of Graham's?"

"Not exactly. The firm took it up." Blinky winked savagely at this. "The firm—what firm?" "Graham & Duncan, sir. I've been taken into partnership."

"Have, eh?" Blinky grunted mysteriously and fished in his pocket for some bills and silver. "Waal, here's some change comin' to the firm, then. And here," he added, producing the document in question, "is Sam's note."

"Thank you," Duncan ceremoniously deposited both in the till, going behind the soda fountain to do so, and then waited, expectant. Blinky was grunting busily in the key of one about to make an important communication.

"I'm glad you're a-comin' in here with Sam," he said at length, with an acid grimace that was meant to be a smile.

"Oh, it may be only temporary," Nat endeavored to assume a serene expression and partially succeeded. "I'm devoting much of my time to



"YOU'RE MR. DUNCAN?" HE ASKED.

my studies," he pursued primly, "but nevertheless feel I should be earning something too."

"That's right—that's the kind of spirit I like to see in a young man. You always go to church, don't you?" "No, sir—Sundays only."

"That's what I mean. Do you drink?" "Oh, no, sir," Duncan parroted glibly. "don't smoke, drink, swear, and on Sundays I go to church."

The bland smile with which he faced Lockwood's keen scrutiny disarmed suspicion.

"I'm glad to hear that," Blinky told him. "I'm at the head of the temperance movement here, and I hope you'll join us and set an example to our fast young men."

"I feel sure I could do that," said Duncan meekly.

Lockwood removed his hat, exposing the cranium of a baldheaded eagle, and fanned himself. "Warm today,"

he observed in an endeavor to be genial that all but sprained his temperament. Indeed, so great was the strain that he winked violently.

Duncan observed this phenomenon with natural astonishment not unmingled with awe. "Yes, sir; very," he agreed, wondering what it might portend.

"I believe I'll have a glass of sody," "Certainly," Duncan, by now habituated to the formula of soda dispensing, promptly produced a bright and shining glass.

"I see you've been fixin' this place

up some." "Oh, yes," said Nat loftily. "We expect to have the best drug store in the state. What sody would you prefer?" "Just sody," stipulated Lockwood. His spasmodic wink again smote Duncan's understanding a mighty blow. Unable to believe his eyes, he hedged and stammered. Could it be? This from the leader of the temperance movement in Radville?

"I beg pardon?" His denseness irritated Blinky slightly, with the result that the right side of his face again underwent an alarming convulsion. "I say," he explained carefully, "just—plain—sody."

"On the level?" "What?" grunted Blinky, and blinked again. A smile of comprehension irradiated Nat's features. "Pardon," he said. "I'm a little new to the business."

Blinky, fanning himself industriously, glanced round the store while Duncan, turning his back, discreetly found and uncorked the whisky bottle. He poured out a liberal dose of raw red liquor. Then, with his fingers clamped tightly about the bottom of the glass,



"I SAY, JUST—PLAIN—SODY."

the better to conceal its contents from any casual but inquisitive passerby, he quickly filled it with soda and placed it before Blinky, accompanying the action with the sweetest of child-like smiles.

Lockwood, nodding his acknowledgments, lifted the glass to his lips. Duncan awaited developments with some apprehension. To his relief, however, Blinky, after an experimental swallow, emptied the mixture expeditiously into his system and smacked his thin lips resoundingly.

"How," he demanded, "can any one want intoxicatin' likkers when they can get such a bracin' drink as that?"

"I pass," Nat breathed, limp with admiration of such astounding hypocrisy.

Blinky reluctantly pried a nickel loose from his finances and placed it on the counter. Duncan regarded it with disdain.

"Ten cents more, please," he suggested tactfully.

"What for?" The explanation was accompanied by a very passable imitation of Blinky's blink.

CHAPTER XIII.
HAPPILY for Duncan, Blinky had no sense of humor. If he had he would explode the very first time he indulged in introspection.

"Not much," said he, with his sour smile. "I guess you're jokin' about the price of that drink. Well, good luck to you, Mr. Duncan. I'd like to have you come round and see us some evenin'."

"Thank you very much, sir," Duncan accompanied Blinky to the door. "I've already had the pleasure of meeting your daughter, sir. She's a charming girl."

"I'm real glad you think so," said Blinky, intensely gratified. "She seems to've taken a great shine to you too. Come round and get 'quainted with the hull family. You're the sort of young feller I'd like her to know." He paused and looked Nat up and down cautiously, as one might appraise the points of a horse of quality put up for sale. "Good day," said he with the most significant of winks.

"Oh, that's all right," Nat hastened to reassure him. "I won't say a word about it."

Blinky, on the point of leaving, started to question this (to him) cryptic utterance, but luckily had the current of his thoughts diverted by the entrance of Roland Barnette in company with his friend Mr. Burnham.

Roland's consternation at this unexpected encounter was, in the mildest term, extreme. At sight of his employer he pulled up as if slapped. "Oh," he faltered, "I didn't know you was here, sir."

"No," said Blinky, with keen relish. "I guess you didn't."

"I—ah—come over to see Sam about that note," stammered Roland.

"Waal, don't you bother your head 'bout what ain't your business. Royle Come on back to the bank."

"All right, sir," Roland grasped frantically at the opportunity to emphasize his importance. "Excuse me, Mr. Lockwood, but I'd like to inter-

duce you to a friend of mine, Mr. Burnham, from New York."

Amused, Burnham stepped into the breach. "How are you?" he said with the proper nuance of cordiality, offering his hand.

Lockwood shook it unemotionally. "How do do?" he said perfunctorily. "I brought Mr. Burnham in to see Sam."

"Yes," Burnham interrupted Roland quickly; "Barnette's been kind enough to show me round town a bit."

"Here on business?" inquired Lockwood pointedly.

"No, not exactly," returned Burnham

with practical ease; "just looking round."

"Only lookin', eh?" Blinky's countenance underwent one of its erratic quakes as he examined Burnham with his habitual intensity.

The New Yorker caught the wink and lost breath. "Ah—yes—that's all," he assented uneasily. And as he spoke another wink dumfounded him. "Why?" he asked, with a distinct loss of assurance. "Don't you believe it?"

"Don't see no reason why I should not," grunted Blinky. "Hope you'll like what you see. Good day."

"So long, Mr. Lockwood," returned Burnham uncertainly.

Lockwood paused outside the door. "Come 'long, Roland."

"Yes, sir; right away; just a minute," Roland was lingering unwillingly, detained by Burnham's imperative hand. "What'd you want? I got to hurry."

"What was he winking at me for?" demanded Burnham heatedly. "Have you?"

"Oh!" Roland laughed. "He wasn't winking. He can't help doing that. It's a twitchin' he's got in his eye. That's why they call him Blinky."

"Oh, that was it!" Burnham accepted the explanation with distinct relief, while Duncan, who had been an unregarded spectator, suddenly found cause to retire behind one of the show cases on important business.

So that was the explanation!

After his paroxysm had subsided and he felt able to control his facial muscles, Duncan emerged suave and solemn. Roland had disappeared with Blinky, and Burnham was alone.

"Anything you wish, sir?" asked Nat.

"Only to see Mr. Graham."

"He's out just at present, but I think he'll be back in a moment or so. Will you wait? You'll find that chair comfortable, I think."

"Believe I will," said Burnham, with an air. He seated himself. "I can't wait long, though," he amended.

"Yes, sir. And if you'll excuse me"—Burnham's hand dismissed him with a tolerant wave. "Go right on about your business," he said, with supreme condescension.

And Duncan returned to his work in the back yard.

It wasn't long before he found occasion to go back to the store, and by that time old Sam was there in conversation with Burnham.

"That's part of my business," he heard Burnham say in his sleek, oleaginous accents. "Sometimes I pick up an odd, no 'count contraption that makes me a bit of money, and more times I'm stung and lose on it. There might be something to this gas burner of yours, and again there mightn't. I've been thinking I might be willing to risk a few dollars on it if we could come to terms."

"Do you mean it really?" said old Sam eagerly.

"Not to invest in it, so to speak; I don't think its chances are strong enough for that. But if you'd care to sell the patent outright and aren't too ambitious we might make a dicker. What'd you say?"

"Why, yes," said Graham, quivering with anticipation. "Yes, indeed, if—"

"Well?"

"If you really think it's worth anything, sir."

Burnham laughed doubtfully and said: "Well, as I say, there's no telling, but I was thinking about it at dinner, and I sort of concluded I'd like to own



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"Then it's a bargain?" "Why, I hope it won't lose any money for you, Mr. Burnham," Sam



THE OLD MAN LIGHTED A CANDLE.

hesitated, with his ineradicable sense of fairness and square dealing. "Making gas from crude oil ought to"—

Duncan never heard the end of that speech. For some moments he had been listening intently, trying to recollect something. The name of Burnham plucked a string on the instrument of his memory. He knew he had heard it some place, some time in the past, but how or when or in respect to what he could not make up his mind. It had required Sam's reference to gas and crude oil to close the circuit. Then he remembered. Kellogg had mentioned a man by the name of Burnham who was "on the track of" an important invention for making gas from crude oil. This must be the man Burnham, the tracker, and poor old Graham must be the tracked.

Without warning Duncan ran round and made himself an uninvited third to the conference.

"Mr. Graham, one moment!" he begged, excited. "Is this patent of yours on a process of making gas from crude oil?"

Burnham looked up impatiently, frowning at the interruption, but Graham was all good humor.

"Why, yes," he started to explain; "it's that burner over there that!"

"But I wouldn't sell it just yet if I were you," said Nat. "It may be worth a good deal!"

"Now, look here!" Burnham got to his feet in anger. "What business have you got butting into this?" he demanded, putting himself between Duncan and the inventor.

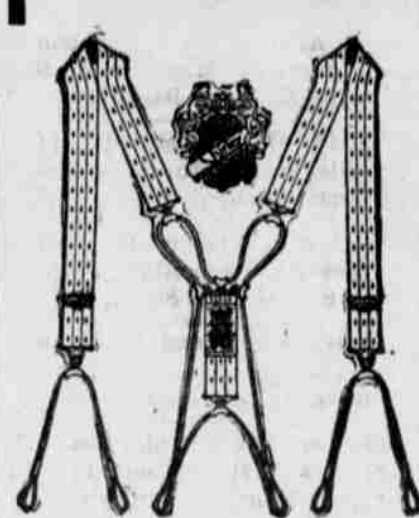
"Me?" Duncan queried simply. "Only just because I'm a business man. If you don't believe it ask Mr. Graham."

"He's got a perfect right to advise me, Mr. Burnham," interposed Graham, rising.

"Well, but—but what objection 've you got to his making a little money out of this patent?" Burnham blustered.

(To be continued.)

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Wife—Darling, I want a new gown. Husband—But you had a new one only a short time ago.

Wife—Yes; but my friend Ellen is to be married, and I can't wear the same dress I wore at her last wedding.

—Flegende Blaetter.

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Causes uneasy nights, but if you will use Dr. Bell's Pine-Tar-Honey it will relieve in a few minutes. There is nothing better. Guaranteed by all dealers.

"What do you know about this Atlee Pomerene of Ohio? I see by the papers—"

"I've heard the name several times; I think it's a variety of winter apples they raise in that state."—Chicago Tribune.

Teachers' Examination.

The Highland county Board of School Examiners hereby gives notice that examinations of applicants for certificates will take place in the Washington School Building, Hillsboro, on the first Saturday of every month.

Patterson examinations will be held on the third Saturday of April and on the second Saturday of May.

As prescribed by law, the fee for teachers' examinations will be 50 cents, while, for Patterson examinations no fee is charged.

J. S. FARIS, Pres.
H. B. GALLETT, Lynchburg, O.,
Clerk
Board of Examiners.

Notice of Appointment.

Estate of Elizabeth VanWinkle deceased. The undersigned has been appointed and qualified as executor of the estate of Elizabeth VanWinkle, late of Highland county, Ohio, deceased.

Dated this 10th day of December A. D. 1910.

J. D. VANWINKLE, Exr.

Sheriff's Sale

J. W. Evans vs. C. R. Stout, Highland County Court of Common Pleas. Case No. 8456.

ORDER OF SALE OF REAL ESTATE IN ATTACHMENT.

In pursuance of an order issued from the Court of Common Pleas within and for the County of Highland and State of Ohio, made at the January term thereof A. D. 1911, and to me directed, I will offer for sale at Public Auction, at the door of the Court House, in the village of Hillsboro, Ohio, on

Saturday, February 25, 1911,

at 1 o'clock p. m. of said day the following described Real Estate, to-wit:

Being an estate during the life of said C. R. Stout, in the west half of said Real estate; also the fee simple in the undivided 4-15 interest thereof, which said real estate is situated in Concord township, Highland county, O., to-wit: Beginning at a stone in a country road and in the original line and S. E. corner to lower tract; thence with said lower N. 23 degs. E. 14 poles to a stone N. 68 degs. W. 5 poles to a stone; S. 23 degs. W. 12 poles to a stone; thence N. 68 degs. W. 62 poles to a stone; thence N. 34 degs. E. 14 poles to a stone N. E. corner of lower lot; thence S. 84 degs. E. 26 poles to a stone corner to Benjamin Horton's; thence with his line S. 33 degs. W. 13 poles to a stone corner of the same; thence with his and Philip Redkey's line S. 84 degs. E. 123 poles to a stone corner to Redkey's line; thence with same S. 23 degs. W. 23 poles to a stone corner to Coffman's land; thence with his line N. 33 degs. W. 90 poles to a stone on east side of the road and corner to Coffman; thence with another of his lines S. 18 poles to a stone in Stout's line and tract; thence with the same S. 8 degs. W. 71 poles to the beginning, containing 161 acres and 120 poles of land, more or less, and being the same premises assigned and set off to Mary Jane Stout in partition proceedings of the lands of Samuel Mitchell, deceased, at the April term of the Common Pleas Court of Highland County, Ohio, 1871, wherein Ira Mitchell, by John C. Miller, his guardian, was plaintiff and Wesley Mitchell et al were defendants, and which proceedings are recorded in Volume 7 page 84 of the complete records of said Court.

Said premises have been appraised at six hundred and seventy-five dollars, and can not sell for less than two-thirds of said appraisement.

Terms of Sale—Cash on day of sale.

CAREY LONG,

Sheriff of Highland County, O.

Wilson & McBride, Attorneys.

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"How do you know?"

"I've proposed to several."—Cleveland Leader.

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Is a danger signal and should not be neglected. Take Dr. Bell's Pine-Tar-Honey at once. It allays inflammation, stops the cough and heals the membranes.